

Yes, Morse code is the most efficient and reliable mode of communication available for Amateur operator use. However it is just that, another mode. We do not have restrictions placed upon us for RTTY, PSK or any of the other numerous modes we choose to use. Why Morse Code? Public Safety has been mentioned but who monitors the bands for distress calls using Morse? No one does anymore. The military has all gone to digital burst transmissions, the Coast Guard uses phone (voice) and MARS does also. So who does use the Code? Some traffic handling nets still do, but this is by operator choice. There are also plenty that operate Morse just for fun. This is wonderful that they can and do operate in this mode. But, it is still operator choice. Why should I not have the availability to certain bands just because I don't choose to operate in this mode? In my case it is not that I choose not to operate Code, I can't. I have a hearing loss and cannot tell the difference between a dit and a dah. I believe that the people that use the excuses " I did it so you do too" or " If you don't use Morse you are nothing but a CB'er " do this hobby a grave injustice. There are plenty of good operators that cannot pass this test, get frustrated and leave the hobby. Another argument is that if we remove the Code requirement that all of HAM radio will turn into high powered CB. What arrogance! Not only does this insinuate that those that know Morse are "better" than the rest of us, it is also hypocritical. Listen to 80 meters sometime and the language our venerated Extra's use. Talk about Holier than thou! If there are worries about "low class" people getting on the air I believe the barn door theory works here. What is more of a problem are bootleg operators getting a much modified and amplified radio and just getting on the air. Right now the FCC is asking for help with a bootleg 10-meter problem. I suggest this is more of a problem to HAM radio than who does, or does not know Morse Code.

My suggestion is to support the VES and drop the Morse Code requirement completely and grandfather all Technicians to Tech + privileges and leave the General and Extra class, along with the band plans alone. Those that still want to use the Code will, and have their own frequencies to do so.

Thank you for allowing me the time and space to air my opinion.

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